

CHAPTER-2

MAPPING THE REGION: GEOGRAPHICAL AND GEO-STRATEGICAL ASPECTS

*Who has not heard of the Vale of Kashmir
With the brightest roses the earth ever gave,
Its temples and grottos and fountains clear
As the love-lighted eyes that hang over their wave?*

Sir Thomas Moore, *Lalla Rookh*

MUGHAL PERCEPTION OF KASHMIR AND KASHMIRIS:

The fabled Vale of Kashmir lies in the lap of lofty snow-sprinkled majestic Himalayas, the world's most distinctive landmark, if not unique, which never had disappointed the expectations of its visitors. It has been called the abode of the gods, paradise on earth, and the Switzerland of Asia¹. The celebrated historian Abul-Fazl appreciating its beauty as, "the country (Kashmir) is enchanting and might be fitting called it a garden of perpetual spring surrounded by a citadel terraced to the skies and deservedly appropriate to be either the delight of the worldling or the retired abode of the recluse. Its streams are sweet to the taste, its waterfalls music to the ear and its climate is invigorating. The flowers are enchanting and fill the heart with delight. Violets, the red rose and the wild narcissus cover the plains."²

Emperor Jahangir paid glowing tribute to the Kashmir in these words "If one were to take to praise Kashmir, whole books would have been written. Kashmir is a garden of eternal spring or an iron fort to a palace of kings, a delightful flower bed, and a heart expanding heritage for *dervishes*. Its pleasant meads and enchanting cascades are beyond all description. There are running streams and fountains beyond count. Wherever the eye reaches, there are verdure and running water. The red rose, the violet and the narcissus grow of themselves; in the fields, there are all kinds of flowers and all sorts of sweet-scented herbs more than can be calculated. In the soul- enchanting springs the hills and the plains are filled with blossoms; the gates, the walls, the courts, the roofs, are lighted

¹ Sir Francis Younghusband, *Kashmir*, Sagar Publications, New Delhi, 1970, p. 2.

² Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng., trans., H. Blochman, Vol. II, Low Price Publication, Delhi, 1927, reprinted 1994, pp. 143-144.

up by the torches of the banquet- adoring tulips.”³ In fact, even the axiom of Kashmir, ‘the paradise on earth’ was coined by the Mughal emperor Jahangir.⁴ Francoise Bernier remarks that, “In truth, the kingdom surpasses in beauty all that my warmest imagination had anticipated.”⁵ The modern British historian Walter Lawrence wrote in 19th century about the valley of Kashmir, “an emerald set in pearls; a land of lakes, clear streams, green turf, magnificent trees and mighty mountains, where the air is cool, and the water sweet, where men are strong, and women vie with the soil in fruitfulness.”⁶

Though, from time immemorial, its exquisite beauty and pleasure loving physical conditions rather than its human history have been appreciated by poets, sages and monarchs, the history of its people had often been portrayed in black colours and if mentioned, reduced to limitations of a page. Ill-fated inhabitants of this so-called eternal land, remarks Abul Fazl, “is the bane of country”.⁷ Emperor Jahangir even denigrated them as “animal like Kashmiris”.⁸ Shah Nawaz Khan denounced Kashmiri’s as of ‘seditious intriguing nature.’⁹ The sagacious Emperor Aurangzeb called them *bepir* (vicious) and *be-ta-miz* (lacking discretion).¹⁰ If this all was not enough, the derogative remarks were popularised which can be reflected from the folklore. For instance:

Agar qahat-ur-rijal uftad az an seh mihr kamjui
Awwal Kumbu, doyum Afghan, siyum badzat Kashmiri.
Zeh Kumbu hila me ayad zen Afghan kina me ayad
*Zen Kashmiri na me ayad bajuz anduh wa dilgiri*¹¹

Its English rendering is that,

³ Jahangir, *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, or Memoirs of Jahangir* (Eng. trans. by A. Rogers, edited by H. Beveridge), Vol. II, New Delhi, p. 114.

⁴ G.M.D. Sufi, *Kashir, : Being a History of Kashmir From the Earliest Times to our Own*, 2 vols., Light and Life Publications, New Delhi, 1974, Vol., I, p. 295.

⁵ Francois Barnier, *Travels in Mogul Empire*, (Eng. Trans., Archibald Constable), New Delhi, 1968, p. 351n.

⁶ Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, Katib Ghar, Srinagar, 1996, p. 13.

⁷ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., III, p. 358.

⁸ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangir*, Vol., II, p. 148.

⁹ Shah Nawaz Khan, *Saiyar*, Vol., I, p. 105.

¹⁰ Vide R.K. Parmu, *A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir*, Peoples Publishing House, Delhi, 1969, p. 436; Showkat Ahmad Dar, *Legacy of Mughal Rule in Kashmir (1586-1753)*, Punjab History Conference Patiala, 2013.

¹¹ Cf. Abdul Ahad, *Kashmir Rediscovered*, Humayun Publishing House, Srinagar, 2006.p. 182; R.K. Parmu, *1320-1819*, Peoples Publishing House, Delhi, 1969, p. 275.

‘do not expect any help from three categories of people even if you are suffering from famine i.e. the Kumbus, the Afghans and the indiscreet Kashmiris. The Kumbus cheat you by their cunning; the Afghans will only spite you and the Kashmiris will only narrate their own sob stories and end up trying to get something out of you rather than giving you anything.

I

GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT AND OUTLYING REGIONS:

The celebrated Valley of Kashmir, a half-closed ecosystem is the foci of our study, is surrounded by a great bowl of crags of Great Himalaya and the Pir Panjal with one narrow gap near the north-west end (*Varmul*) by which the drainage of the valley and of the inside slopes of the mountains escape to the sea.¹² It is about 84-89 miles long and 20-25 miles broad (135-140 by 40-45 kms) with a floor which in the Jhelum flood plain is only 5, 200 feet (1585 mts) above the sea level lying in between 33° 30’ and 34° 40’ North latitude and 74° 20’ to 75° 40’ East longitude.

Until mid-19th Century AD, the term ‘Kashmir’ geographically does not denote the modern State of Jammu and Kashmir comprising the Indian administered areas of Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh; the Pakistani-administered Gilgit-Baltistan and the Azad Kashmir provinces and the Chinese-administered regions of Aksai Chin and Trans-Karakoram tract, but only the Valley between the Great Himalayas and the Pir Panjal Mountain ranges or simply the area drained by the headwaters of Jhelum (*Vitasta*) and to the inner slopes of the ring of mountains that surround it.¹³ To make this point more explicit by delineating the boundaries of the Kashmir both from the contemporary and near contemporary sources, especially *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, which provide sufficient information regarding the extent and boundaries of the Mughal *subahs* and *sarkars* of Hindustan in general and Kashmir in particular during the times of Emperor Akbar, these sources describe Kashmir in detail, as the authors were highly impressed by

¹² Fredrick Drew, *The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, Oriental Publishers, Delhi: rep. 1971, p. 161

¹³ For details see C. Bates, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kishtawar, Badarwa, Jammu, Naoshera, Punch and the Valley of Kishanganga*, Calcutta, 1873, pp. 1-2 and map; Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 6.

the scenic beauty of the region. In addition, they look upon it as ‘a holy land’ full of sacred places and hermits.

Abul-Fazl, the court historian of Akbar, included the *sarkar* of Kashmir in the *subah* of Kabul- the north-westernmost *subah* of the Mughal Empire which was comprised of Kashmir, Pakhli, Bhimber, Swat, Bajaur, Qandahar, and Zubulistan; its capital was formerly Ghaznah and latter Kabul.¹⁴ Its Cis-Indus part, which may be divided into proper Valley of Kashmir and the outlying regions broadly constituted in 1586, the kingdom or Sarkar of Kashmir. Broadly speaking, the Mughal Suba of Kashmir was larger than the present valley, but unquestionably much smaller than the present state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The descriptions of the boundaries and the area of Kashmir given by various medieval writers significantly vary from one another, as its boundaries have frequently been shrinking and swelling from time to time. According to Mirza Haider Daughlat, the plain (*julga*) of the Kashmir extended from the Bakani quarter which means “between the south and the east,” towards the Rikan Bain (on north-west); it is a level expanse about a hundred *kruh* (‘kos’ equivalent to thirty *farsakhs*) in length. Its width is at some parts about twenty *kruh*, and in a few places ten *kruh*.¹⁵ Abul Fazl, the ideologue of Emperor Akbar, describes its boundaries as “On its East are Paristan and the river Chenab, and on the South-East Banihal and the Jammu mountains, and on the North-East, Great Tibet; on the West, Pakhil and the Kishan Ganga river; on the South- West, the Gakkhar country and on the North- West little Tibet”.¹⁶ Furthermore, Kashmir borders Lahore in the north, remarks Abul Fazl.¹⁷ The statement of Abul Fazl is not correct as in between these two territories Rajauri and Punch were the independent states. Similar mistake had been made by the reputed scholar Irfan Habib, while framing the political map of Kashmir.¹⁸

¹⁴ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 115, 347; Kashmir assumed the status of full-fledged province (*Subah*) under Emperor Nuru-ud-din Mohammad Jahangir (1605-1627 AD).

¹⁵ Mirza Haider Daughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Eng. Trans. from Persian, N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, “*A History of Mughals of Central Asia*”, Renaissance Publishing House, Delhi, reprinted 1986, p. 424.

¹⁶ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng., trans., H. S. Jarrett, Vol., II, p. 351

¹⁷ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 315.

¹⁸ He included both Punch and Rajauri within the boundaries of Kashmir. See Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1982, map 3 (A).

Moreover, according to Abul Fazl, the entire area of the Valley from Qambar Ver to Kishan Ganga is hundred twenty Kos in the length and ten to twenty five Kos in breadth.¹⁹ While as Emperor Jahangir in *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* mentions that the measurements given by Abul Fazl were mere guesswork and conjectures. To overcome this problem, Jahangir, out of prudence and caution appointed a number of trustworthy and intelligent men to measure the length and breadth with ropes (*tanab*). The result was that what the Shaikh (Abul Fazl) wrote as 120 *kos* came out as 67 *kos*. According to him the length of Kashmir from the pass of Buliyasa to Qamabar, as fifty-six Jahangiri *kos* long, and the variation in breadth were found to be not more than two *kos*.²⁰ He further adds that the boundary of country is the place up to which people speak the language of the country; it follows the boundary of Kashmir.²¹ Muhammad Saleh Kamboh places the Kashmir in the South-North direction, from the Qasbah of Verinag up to Darwaza Kutal belonging to the *pargana* of Dachhina and Khawara as 100 *kruh* and its width from Moza Koknah in the east up to Firozpora of *pargana* Bangil, about 30 *kruh*.²² Bernier, who accompanied Emperor Aurangzeb, placed Kashmir to the north of Lahore, enclosed by the mountains at the foot of Caucasus, those of the kings of Great Tibet and Little Tibet, and of the Raja Gamon, who are its most immediate neighbours. He further added that it is about thirty leagues in length, and from ten to twelve in breadth.²³ The differences in the geographical extent of Valley of Kashmir given by these sources were mainly due to

¹⁹ Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 351-32 Qambar Ver (ancient Kramavarta) was a watch station on the Pir Pantsal range. Stein, Chron. II, p. 292.

²⁰ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Eng., trans., Alexander Rogers, Vol., II, p. 298; Buliyasa is 11 *kos*. The *kos* that were in use during the Jahangir's reign was same that of his father. Kos is 5000 yards and the yard is 2 sharfi yards, each of the latter (yards) being 24 digits (*angusht*). *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 147-148.

²¹ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Eng., trans., Alexander Rogers, Vol., II, p. 298.

²² *Shahjahan Nama*, Vol., II, p. 25.

²³ F. Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire 1656-68*, Eng., Trans., p. 395. According to Abul Fazl Kashmir borders Lahore in the north. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 315; More reliable and comprehensive account of the geography has been given by F. Drew and Walter Lawrence. They put the Valley of Kashmir approximately eighty four miles in length and twenty to twenty five miles in breadth and the whole area within the mountain boundaries which surrounds may be estimated at about 3,900 square miles. F. Drew, *Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, p. 12; Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 12; See also Stein, *Ancient Geography of Kashmir*, p. 64.

the faulty measurement rather than any other particular reason. Moreover, from the detailed description of the *parganas* available in both Mughal and regional sources the exact politico-administrative boundaries of the region under study can be demarcated.

II

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS:

Traditionally, for administrative purposes, the whole valley of Kashmir had been divided into two major divisions, one comprising upper part known as the *Maraz* (Madavarajya) and the lower part called the *Kamraz* (Kramarajya).²⁴ Furthermore, they were subdivided into number of administrative units formerly known as *Visayas*, and in the Sultanate and the Mughal times as the *Parganas* or the *Mahals*.²⁵ Each *pargana* had a number of villages, varied in size and number which formed the unit of administration.²⁶

Describing the Mughal Empire, the author of *Tarikh-i-Hasan* imperfectly has mentioned that Emperor Akbar divided his empire into nineteen *Subahs*, and counts Kashmir as one among them.²⁷ However, the systematic account recorded by Abul Fazl mentions that Emperor Akbar's kingdom was divided into fifteen *Subahs*, and Kashmir was a *Sarkar* belonging to *Subah* of Kabul.²⁸ It had thirty-eight *Mahals* and one among them was *Mahal* of Srinagar.²⁹ It must be remembered that the city of Srinagar was called by the same name, as the country, that is, "Kashmir."³⁰ Accordingly, with the exception

²⁴ From the various references in the *Rajatarangini*, Abul Fazl and *Tuzuk-i-Jahangir* makes it clear that *Maraz* comprised the districts on both sides of Jhelum (Vitasta) above Srinagar, and *Kamraz* those below. Stein, *Rajatarangini*, Vol., II, p. 436; Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 176; Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 298.

²⁵ For details Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng., trans., H.S. Jarrett, Vol., II, pp. 94-96; See *Rajatarangini*, V. p. 51; VIII, p. 1260, 1413; Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., III, pp. 548-549; Anonymous, *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, p. 250.

²⁶ Muhammad Azam Didamari, *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*, trans., Shams-ud-din Ahmed, Vol., I, p. 460

²⁷ Shah Hasan, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Urdu trans., Moulvi Ibrahim, "Tarikh-i-Kashmir", Srinagar, 1957. pp. 243-44.

²⁸ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, pp. 115, 347.

²⁹ Hasan, *op.cit.*, pp. 243-44. Irfan Habib states that *pargana* and *Mahala* are synonym terms. *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Oxford University Press, New York, (Reprinted) 1963, pp. 2-3.

³⁰ Bernier, *op.cit.*, p. 397; Wakefield, *op.cit.*, p. 91; F. Drew, *op.cit.*, p. 183.

of Mirza Haider Daughlat, Abul Fazl and Jahangir and almost all the Mughal chroniclers call it either Kashmir or *Shahr-i- Kashmir*. Also, we find that Bernier in Aurangzeb's time, and Forster, who travelled in this country in 1783, use the name Kashmir and not Srinagar.³¹ The province lies upon both sides of river *Bihat* (Jhelum) which winds in a meandering course with many islands and finally falls into the Indus. Reproducing the report of Asaf Khan, Abul Fazl has mentioned that there were thirty-eight *parganas* in Kashmir. And when Qazi Ali appointed the staff, he distributed the population of Kashmir into forty one *parganas*. The difference in the number was actually due to the amalgamation of some and the splitting up of the other *parganas*. For instance, Qazi Ali added the two *parganas* of Karnah and Drawah which were bifurcated from *pargana Kamraz*. Then a new *pargana* was created by dividing *pargana Sairu'l Mawazai* (village group) into two units.³² Depending upon the circumstances, adjustment and readjustment in the number of *parganas* were made by adding together or bifurcating the villages from them.³³

III

Immediately outside the Valley of Kashmir, the mountain regions almost in every direction were occupied by the refractory hilly chieftains. On the north-east, two powerful chiefs were the rulers of *Tibet-i- Khurd* (Baltistan) and *Tibet-i- Kalan* (Ladakh), respectively. The rulers of these principalities had often been at war with each other. From time to time, they owed allegiance to the Sultanate rulers and paid them tribute.³⁴

³¹ F. Drew, *op.cit.*, p. 183; Wakefield, *op.cit.*, p. 91;

³² Forty villages of Maraz district were united under the name of *pargana Haveli* and retained eighty-eight villages of *Kamraz* according to the former distribution under the separate name of *pargana Sairul Mawazai*. *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, Vol., I, pp. 243-45. For details see *Ain-i-Akbari*, second edition corrected and annotated by Sir J. N. Sarkar, pp. 365-68.

³³ Niccolao Manucci in *Storia Do Mogor*, mentioned that the province of Kashmir has forty-six *Parganas*. Vol. II, 1990, p. 388; while as author of *Tarikh-i-Hasan* estimated 38 *Parganas* and 3208 villages. Narain Koul Ajiz, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, estimated their number 37 *Parganas* and 3274 villages. MSS No. 71, *Farsiya Akhbar*, Manuscript section, MAL, AMU, Aligarh, (C. 1710), ff. 41a-42a; Birbal Kachru, *Majmuat-Tawarikh*, make mention of 36 *Parganas* and 3425 villages.

³⁴ Pir Ghulam Hasan, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Vol., I, Srinagar, 1954, pp. 217-19; See also Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir Under The Sultans*, p. 37. Abul Fazl does not specify either *Tibet-i-Khurd* or *Tibet-i-Kalan*, but loosely make mention of Tibet. But from the Akbar Nama we learnt that the expedition was in-fact sent only against *Tibet-i-Khurd*. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., III, p. 823. In pre 1947, *Tibet-i-Khurd* (Baltistan) was part of Ladakh, and along with Gilgit, these regions were administered from Kashmir (Srinagar).

On South-East lay Kishtawar, a tributary of Kashmir, since early times, and a place of refuge for the rebels of Kashmir.³⁵ On South-West of Kashmir was the principality of Rajauri, founded by ruthless *khasas*,³⁶ and in 16th century, it was ruled by the Muslim chiefs.³⁷ Pakhli was on the west of valley of Kashmir and like other principalities, it was tributary of Kashmiri Sultans and accepted their overlord ship.³⁸ Pakhli according to *Ain-i-Akbari* was a *sarkar* of the *subah* of Kabul but after the separation of Kashmir and Kabul it was attached to the *subah* of Kashmir.³⁹ The other neighbouring principalities were Punch, Gilgit, Damtur, Karna, Dachna and Khavra.⁴⁰ Once the power changed hands from the Chaks to the Mughals in the Kashmir, the chiefs of these principalities submitted themselves to the new masters, though not without stiff resistance.

IV

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF KASHMIR

A transverse valley enclosed from all sides by high mountain ranges characterized by snow covered lofty peaks is endowed with a distinctive geographical advantage. Situated in the midst of the great civilizations of the ancient and medieval world, Kashmir maintained its contacts through a number of passes, leading through its natural defences; afforded ways for trade and commerce, cultural intercourse and through military invasions. It provided a valuable window to great civilizations like the Chinese, the Indian and the other Central Asian civilizations.

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- In A.D 1590 Emperor Jahangir married a daughter of Ali Rai, Chief of Skardo brought by the Mughal ambassador Haji Mirza Beg Kabuli. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., I, p. 310.
- ³⁵ Hutchinson, *History of Punjab Hill States*, Vol., II, Lahore, 1933, pp. 640-41
- ³⁶ *Rajatarangini*, II, p. 122, iii, p. 227, v, 39; II, pp. 291-92
- ³⁷ Hutchinson, *History of Punjab Hill States*, Vol., II, pp. 669-82; Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, Vol., II, p. 17; Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., III, p. 539
- ³⁸ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., III, pp. 559, 565, Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 125; Kamgar Husain, *Maasir-i-Jahangir*, ff. 125-26
- ³⁹ Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 397; Pakhli had a well defined boundary that helped it in the development of a distinct culture and language. Emperor Jahangir gives its description as "The sarkar of Pakli is 35 kos in length and 25 in breadth. On the east, on two sides, is the hill country of Kashmir; on the west, Atak Benaras (Atak); on the north, Kator; and on the south, the Gakkar country." *Tazuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol., II, p. 126. *Dastur-i-Amal-i-Shahjahani*, f. 7; see also *Waqiat-i-Kashmir*, p. 273
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 560; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 172; *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, Vol., I, p. 227; Karna is mentioned as a village of pargana Kamraj. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol., II, p. 176;

Being inextricably intertwined with their territories, the impulses of these civilizations always had direct bearings on the society, culture and territorial integrity of Kashmir. The people shared many cultural traits with other cultures because of the cumulative result of the long series of contacts or the shared ancestry. From these 'borrowed complexes', the people of the land inherited distinct identity which helped them to live in peace for the most part. The Kashmiri identity was such a special type that the Mughal Emperor Jahangir could not distinguish a Kashmiri Muslim from a Hindu, but could distinguish the Kashmiri from the Mughal.

The importance of the region can also be better viewed in the backdrop of the relation between the states which have common borders and in case of Kashmir its location, according to a subaltern historian, Ramachandra Guha, 'gave the strategic importance quiet out of proportion'. The political changes outside Kashmir intensified the geo-political and geo-strategic significance of the bowl shaped country. Though a land locked country was known to the Persians and the Greeks, it too remained a part of many big empires, for instance, the Achemeniade,⁴¹ the Mauryas, the Indo-Greeks, the Sakas, the Parthians, the Kushans,⁴² the Kidarites, the Huns, the Turks and latter on the Mughals, the Afghans, Sikhs and the Dogras. It was Emperor Ashoka (273-232) who founded the capital city of Kashmir, Srinagar in 250 BC, and brought it into the Mauryan Empire. Srinagar very quickly evolved into a flourishing city with "ninety six thousand dwellings resplendent with prosperity."⁴³ However, it may be noted that no alien power could have ever conquered it until the weakness in the system of governance had not

⁴¹ In 516 B C. the Achaemenian ruler of Iran Dairus extended his empire upto India by annexing Sindh and Gandhara. Greek Sources also testify the fact that at the time of Iranian invasion Kashmir was a part of Gandhara. Upto the Alexander's invasion of India in 327 BC, Achaemenian rules continued to rule in Kashmir for about 200 years. For details see *Milinda Panha*, pp. 331-32; Ray Chaudhary, *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 103

⁴² During the Kushan period, Kashmir became a great centre of Buddhism, even Kanishka Summons the Fourth Buddhist Council in Kashmir in which hundreds of Buddhist savants participated. S. Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western world*, pp. 151-55.

⁴³ Sir Aurel Stein, *Rajatarangini of Kalhana*, Vol., II, pp. 439-41

existed. It had rightly been written by historian Pandit Kalhana that 'Kashmir may be conquered by the forces of spiritual merit but never by the force of soldiers.'⁴⁴

True, Kashmiris in third century BC, more easily succumbed to Buddhism and by the eighth century CE to Brahmanism and then once again in the fourteenth century to Islam. Nevertheless, they surrendered so easily to force. From the dawn of civilization, the biggest misfortune that the people of Kashmir have experienced is that they have been successively ruled by the fortune seekers. History is testimony to the fact that most of the societies in the world have experienced colonialism in one or other form, but the uniqueness of Kashmir among those colonial countries of the world is the centuries of foreign rule. Those foreign rulers had affected the Kashmiri ethos so deeply and had subjected its people to their whims and diktats- a tradition which even today is not absent.

V

In A.D 1586, Kashmir became a Mughal Province and the rule lasted for about one hundred and sixty-seven years (A.D 1586-1753). Why afterall 'mountainous bowl' was annexed by the Mughals in 1586 ? even though after recurring failures, is a question that needs elucidation and thread bear discussion.

Kashmir occupied a special place in the psyche of the Mughals long before its formal annexation in 1586 by Emperor Akbar. Timur showed a great interest in Kashmir but passed away without the annexation; his interest could be seen from his statement mentioned in his autobiography. He writes:⁴⁵

I made enquiries about the country and city of Kashmir from men who were acquainted with it and from them I learnt that...Kashmir is an incomparable country...in the midst of that country there is a very large and populous city. The rulers of the country dwell there. The buildings of the city are very large and are all of wood, and they are four or five storeys high. They are very strong and will stand for 500-700 years. A large river runs through the middle of the city. The inhabitants have cast bridges over the river at nearly thirty places.

Sultan Sikander, who was then occupying the throne of Kashmir, accepted his lordship and in token sent him two elephants in gift. Thus Timur contented himself with tribute

⁴⁴ *Rajatarangini*, I, p. 31, 39

⁴⁵ Cf. Sufi, *op.cit.*, pp. 96-97

paid by the ruler of Kashmir. Sultan Sikander's diplomatic policy saved the country from Timur. Similarly, Kashmir for long retained its isolation cum independence by mere contenting the fortune seekers by gifts and Tributes.

When Zahiruddin Babar, great grandson of Timur, established his rule in India, Kashmir was passing through a period of political turmoil, sectarian differentiation and social operation. The Magray and the Chak clans were opposing one another by tooth and nail and when Abdal Magre requested Babar for help, he readily responded by commissioning Sheikh Ali Beg, Muhammad Khan and Mahmud Khan, to help Abdal Magre.⁴⁶ With the help of the Mughal forces, the power was restored by the disgruntled noble and the Mughal army contented themselves with ransom and tribute. Thus, Kashmiri nobles in order to settle their internal problems requested the foreign elements for help, which later on, resulted in loss of independence.

Babar died in 1530, but attempt to annex Kashmir was carried on by his successors. In October-November 1531, Kamran, brother of Emperor Humayun and the governor of Punjab sent a punitive expedition under the command of Mahram Beg Koka.⁴⁷ The Kashmir army offered no resistance whatsoever. This episode has been recorded by a contemporary, Suka in the following words: ⁴⁸

The cowardly Kashmiri's placed their soldiers within forts. The citizens went out by different ways to the caves of the mountains in fear and as Malecha solders outnumbered the Kashmiri fighters the latter were destroyed. The Mughals who had destroyed Qutubdina found the beautiful capital empty, and in anger set fire to the houses and places then they killed thousands of people in the capital of the kingdom.

The barbarianism of the Mughal forces united the divided Kashmiri camp into the Chaks and the Magreys, two influential families, to fight jointly against the Mughals. It resulted in bloodshed and ultimately the defeat of Mughal soldiers at Athwajin and, they had to retreat in disorder.⁴⁹ Very shortly, in 1533 another Mughal incursion was directed towards

⁴⁶ *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, pp. 120-21

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 135-36

⁴⁸ Suka, *Rajatarangini*, Eng., trans, J. C. Dutt, p. 369-70

⁴⁹ For details, see R. K. Parimu, *The History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, 1320-1819*, Peoples Publishing House, Delhi, 1969, p. 207

Kashmir by Sultan Said Khan of Kashgar under the command of Mirza Haider Daughlat, maternal cousin of Babar. He entered Kashmir easily at the head of 4000 horses. Initially, he met feeble resistance from the divided house of Kashmiri's. But later on, the Kashmiris adopted guerrilla warfare, many of them died, but they continued their fight and the forces of opposite camp were compelled to sue for peace, and accordingly an agreement was arrived. Mirza Haider and his soldiers were allowed to depart on the last day of the month of *shawwal* 939 A.H. (May, A.D 1533).⁵⁰ The event has been described by Mirza Haider Daughlat, as:⁵¹

Government in Kashmir was at that time conducted in name of Mohammad Shah. Among the Maliks of Kashmir, after Ali Mir who was killed, there were Abdal Makri, Kazi Chak, Lahur Makri and Yak Chak. When terms of peace were proposed they were very thankful, but they did not credit, wondering how people who had once conquered such a beautiful country could be so senseless as to give it up... the khutba was read and coins were struck in the exalted name of khan (Sultan Said Khan)... Muhammad Shah daughter was wedded to Iskandar Sultan.

After the death of Sultan Said Khan of Kashgar, Mirza Haider Daughlat left the court of the Kashgar ruler Abdul Rashid Khan and joined the service of the Mughals at Lahore. On May 17, 1540, the might of the son of Babar was tested by the Afghan commander, Sher Shah Suri at Kanauj. Sher Shah dislodged him by root and branch and drove Humayun into long and hurried exile.⁵²

Meanwhile, the political situation in Kashmir was fluid and the kingmakers, (the Magreys and the Chak nobles) more often engrossed themselves in the seesaw gamble of installing men of their choices on the throne. For instance, Sultan Shams-ud-din II ruled for one year (1537-38) and was succeeded by Ismail Shah (1538-40) by the active support of Kachi Chak. The discontented nobles, Abdal Magre and Regi Chak through Khwaja

⁵⁰ Showkat A Dar, *A Study of Changing Economy of the Valley of Kashmir under the Mughals*, M. Phil Dissertation, G. N. D. University, Amritsar, 2012, p. 17.

⁵¹ Mirza Haider Daughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Eng., trans., pp. 439-441; for details *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, p. 130-32; G. M. D Sufi, *Islamic Culture in Kashmir*, p. 94.

⁵² For details see Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., I, Eng., Trans., H. Beveridge, p. 360; H. Elliot and John Dowson, *The History of India as Told by its own Historians*, Trubner and Co, London, 1871, Vol. V, p. pp. 143-45.

Haji, appealed Mirza Haider Daughlat for help against Kaji Chak.⁵³ Mirza Haider Daughlat suggested the exiled Humayun to make Kashmir his base of power against Sher Shah, but the brother of Humayun, Kamran, was reluctant to this plan.⁵⁴ However, when Humayun abandoned Lahore, his exiled home, he provided a small force of 400 troops to Mirza Haider to conquer Kashmir. Mirza Haider, a great strategist and planner initially marched along Pir Panjal route upto Noushera and then opted the longer route of Punch because of being unguarded; he reached the capital city, Srinagar without resistance and a single blow in battle.⁵⁵ Hearing the news of his arrival, Kaji Chak fled to Agra and sought help from Sher Shah Suri. The anonymous author of *Baharistan-i-Shahi* puts it, as:⁵⁶

...Sher Shah sympathised with him (Kaji Chak) profusely and conferred upon him the title of *Khani-i-khana*, and even provided him with as much assistance as he desired...

The furious battle took place at Watanar (near Shopyan) in which the combined forces of Afghan and Kaji Chak were defeated by the small force of Haider Mirza.⁵⁷ This also decided the fate in his favour; he declared titular Nazuk Shah as Sultan and ruled the state of affairs for almost eleven years before being murdered on 19 November 1550.⁵⁸ About

⁵³ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., I, p. 359.

⁵⁴ The Kashmiri nobles were continuously writing letters to Mirza Daughlat to conquer Kashmir and all the time he used to bring it to Jahanbai's notice of Humayun. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol. I, Eng., trans., p.360.

⁵⁵ Mirza Haider Daughlat, *Tarikh-i- Rashidi*, Eng., trans., E. Denison Ross and N. Elias, p. 483; About the plan see *Akbar Nama*, Vol. I, Eng., trans., p.360

⁵⁶ Anonymous, *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, Eng., trans., K.N. Pandita, pp.135-36

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, see also Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol., I, Eng., trans., p. 360; For details Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, pp. 129-133.

⁵⁸ Mirza Haider Daughlat ruled Kashmir for ten years from 1541-1551 A.D struck coins and read khutba in the name of Humayun. He adopted ruthless policy against Nurbakshiyyah order and equated Islam with Sunnism. According to him, "Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi introduced a corrupt form of religion giving it the name of Nur Bakshi (giver of light) and practised many heresies. He wrote a book for these cowardly people named the *fiqh-i-Ahwat* (comprehensive laws), which does not conform to the teachings of any of the sect whether Sunni or Shia. These revile the companions of the Prophet and Aiysha, as do the Shia's, but contrary to the teachings of the latter, they look upon Sayyid Mohammad Nur Bakhsh as lord of the age and promised Mehdi. They do not believe in the saints and holy persons in whom the Shia's believed but regard all of them Sunnis." Mirza Haider Daughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, p. 436; He arrested Shaykh Daniyal, son and successor of

his downfall the author of *Baharistan-i-Shahi* remarks that “he gains nothing from pursuing a ruthless and communal policy, except his own downfall.”⁵⁹

After the death of Mirza Haider Daughlat the Chaks took hold on the affairs of state, but the power slipped in and out from weak to weaker one, resulted in confusion and disillusionment at mass level. Furthermore, throughout the Chak rule, there was political corruption, social oppression and the sectarian schism which prompted a section of nobles comprising Sheikh Abdun-Nabi, Mulla Abdulla, Ali Koka and Dati-Koka to adopt the path of their predecessors-- requested Mughal Emperor Jalal-ud-din Mohammad Akbar to help them out of troubled water.⁶⁰ But, this time not surprisingly, a farsighted Emperor was not immediately galvanised into action, he adopted wait-and-watch situation and keeping themselves well informed of the developments in Kashmir and embarked on the diplomatic missions from time to time.

In the meantime, Akbar was successful in subjugating the territory of Gondwana (1564), Chittor and Ranthambore (1568), Kilangar (1569), Gujrat, Bihar and Bengal (1573-76).⁶¹ But, the serious challenge and threat to the infant Empire of Akbar was from the invaders of central Asia or Persia which were always a source of concern to the Indian rulers. So, the Indian rulers had to keep an eye on the vulnerable points like Hindukush ranges which separates Central Asia from Afghanistan, Baluchistan and India is very low in the north of Herat and permits a passage to an invader from Central Asia or Persia to the Kabul Valley and then the lower plains of India.⁶² In 1566, Mirza Hakim-brother of

Mir Shams-ud-din and brought him back as captive; for nearly a year, he was enchained in prison and subjected to physical torture. A sum of one thousand five hundred gold coins (*ashrafis*) was also exacted from him and then was executed. Anonymous, *Baharistan-i Shahi*, p. 88. His harsh policy resulted in his decline. For details see Hakim Safdar Hamdani, *Tarikh-i-Shi'an-i-Kashmir*, Srinagar, 2002, pp. 43-45

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 90

⁶⁰ Suka, *Rajatarangani*, Eng. Trans., J. C. Dutt, *Kings of Kashmira*, Delhi, 1986, p.383; *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, 167; For details see R. K. Parmu, op.cit, p. 245-47; M. Hasan, op.cit, p. 285; Showkat Ahmad Dar, *Kashmir and An Appraisal of Mughal Rule*, Punjab History Conference, Patiala, 44th Session, 2012, pp. 140-146.

⁶¹ For details see R. P. Tripathi, *Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Allahabad, 1972, pp. 192-225.

⁶² M. P. Srivastava, *Policies of the Great Mughals*, Chugh Publications, Allahabad, 1978, p. 113.

Akbar, driven from Badakhshan by Sulaiman Mirza, came to India and sought Akbar's help. But, he soon changed his mind because of being encouraged by the Uzbek rebellion, and plundered Bhera, invaded Punjab and besieged Lahore. But fortunately for the time being, the threat was averted as he immediately returned to Kabul.⁶³ However, in 1580-81, Hakim Mirza at the head of 15,000 horses once again crossed Indus towards Lahore, but was unsuccessful to annex it due to the strong defence of Raja Bhagwan Das and Raja Man Singh. Later on, he was defeated by the duo at Khurd-Kabul. But, he continued to rule Kabul until his death in 1585 in the name of his sister Begum Bakhtunissa. After the death of Hakim Mirza, Raja Man Singh was given the charge of Kabul.⁶⁴ Akbar's soft policy towards his brother was actually to stop him joining the camp of Abdulla Uzbek, who had conquered a large portion of Khurasan, Balkh, Tashkant, Andijan and the entire province of Badakhshan.⁶⁵

After returning from Kabul, Akbar turned his attention towards the frontier tribes and Kashmir, a motivating factor was to prevent the possibility of their being exploited by Abdulla Uzbek and to block his way of entering and invading the Mughal territories. Moreover, Kashmir annexation had some meaning because of strategic interests of the vast Mughal Empire. Kashmir as said earlier, during the Chak rule was passing through political confusion and sectarian bickering. In this confusing atmosphere, Akbar sent a political mission under Mir Muqim and Mir Yuqab to Kashmir during the reign of Husain Shah (1563-1570) and in 1573 another mission was sent under Mulla Ashqi of Ghazni and Qazi Sad-ud-din of Lahore to the court of Ali Shah (1569-79). Both the missions were well received and were successful. Sultan Ali Shah proclaimed Emperor Akbar the sovereign of Kashmir.⁶⁶ After the death of Sultan Ali Shah, he was succeeded by Yusuf

⁶³ M. P. Srivastava, *Policies of the Great Mughals*, Chugh Publications, Allahabad, 1978, pp. 196-97.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 269-71.

⁶⁵ Dr. Ishwari Prasad, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 259-60.

⁶⁶ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Eng., Trans., H. Beveridge, Vol. III, p. 356; For details see Showkat Ahmad Dar, *A Study of Changing Economy of Valley of Kashmir Under the Mughals*, pp. 19-20.

Shah though not without a hard struggle with his uncle Abdal Chak. Yusuf was more a poet than a prince. About him, the author of *Baharistan-i-Shah* writes:⁶⁷

He was well versed in music and Hindi, Kashmiri and Persian poetry. His compositions were popular with the lovers of music...He spent most of the time in physical and sensuous enjoyments. He amused himself with sport, gave himself up to the tune of flute and dulcimer.

Yusuf Shah's inclination towards poetry and music than the state of affairs cost him throne in favour of Sayyid Mohammad Baihaqi (wazir) and then Lohar Shah Chak (his cousin). Although they soon realised the difficulties of administration and invited Yusuf Shah to return, this has been versified by the local historian, as:⁶⁸

Shaha faqr-u fana az ma I mulk u izz u jah az tu
Ki dunya ra baqayi nist khvah az ma khvah az tu

English translation:

O king, renunciation and self annihilation behoves us kingdom
grandeur and dignity are yours, the world is transitory, whether it
belongs to you or to us.

However, the invitation was suspected to be a trap by the latter. Disgruntled Yusuf contrary to his earlier assertion of independence now approached Akbar for help, who was waiting for such an opportunity to come. It was a serious blunder on part of Yusuf Shah and a wonderful opportunity offered to Akbar to make headway in his long cherished mission. Emperor Akbar ordered Raja Man Singh and Mirza Yusuf Khan Razavi to march to Kashmir and restore Yusuf Shah to the throne.⁶⁹ By the time Yusuf and Mughal army reached Lahore, the Kashmiri nobles got alarmed and a deal was offered by Lohar Chak through Abdal Bhat to convince Akbar about the futility of such conquest. Yusuf Shah realised that once the Mughal troops would enter Kashmir, they

⁶⁷ *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, p. 219.

⁶⁸ Hassan Khoihami, *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, Vol., II, p. 302.

⁶⁹ There are contrasting views on this point as per Mughals sources Yusuf Shah was provided an army to help but the author of *Tarikh-i-Kashmir* notes that although Yusuf pleaded for military aid, but his request was not granted by Emperor. Haider Malik Chadoora, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Eng., trans., p. 78-81.

would seize the administration and he would be a puppet in their hands. He double-crossed the Mughals and slipped off, retained the lost throne without the Mughal army.⁷⁰

Yusuf Shah's tactic was not to be taken too kindly by Emperor Akbar as he was not accustomed to such a kind of deception. In 1581A.D, when Akbar was marching towards the North-West frontiers a political mission was deputed under Mirza Tahir and Saleh Iqil to the court of Yusuf Shah demanding his personal presence. Yusuf Shah instead of himself first sent his younger son, Hyder, and then his elder son Yaqub Khan, with costly gifts. Emperor Akbar was totally displeased with this kind of gesture and decided to move in person. Yaqub Chak learnt all this, fled from the camp and went to his home. Suka Pandit has noted this, as:⁷¹

...the king of Kashmir sent his son Yakuba to king Jyalladina, in order to serve him. Yakuba (Yaqub) went with full preparations and when king Jyalladina saw the presents given, he felt a desire to subdue Kashmir. And in order to fulfil his desire he gave necessary orders to Bagwandasa and other kings. And Yaquba on knowing this, returned to his own country and told his father that the king (Akbar) has sent Bagwandasa, against us...

On 19 October, instead of moving personally Akbar once again deputed mission comprising of Hakim Ali Jilani and Bha-ud-din, to persuade Yusuf to attend the court. Yusuf Shah once again was unmoved though he received envoys with respect.⁷²

In A.D 1585, due to the disturbing situation created by the Roshaniyas- the followers of Bayazid in the north-west were against the authority of Mughal Emperor Akbar. Also, in 1585, the Yusufzais led a revolt in the areas of Bajaur and Swad. Thus,

⁷⁰ The deal was-- Yusuf could return to throne if he would come without Mughal army. Having lured Yusuf Shah away from Mughals Lohar Chak gave a battle to him at Sopore on 8 November 1580, but ultimately Yusuf emerge victorious. For details see Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, pp. 164-65; G. M. D. Sufi, *Islamic Culture in Kashmir*, p. 113; Showkat Ahmad Dar, *A Study of Changing Economy of Valley of Kashmir Under the Mughals*, pp. 21-22.

⁷¹ Suka, *Rajatarangini*, Eng., Trans., J. C. Dutt, Vol. III, pp. 399-400; *Akbar Nama*, Eng. trans. H. Beveridge, Vol. II, p. 707.

⁷² Von Noer, *Kaiser Akbar*, Eng., trans., A. S Beveridge, *The Emperor Akbar*, Calcutta, 1890, p.189. According to Tarikh-i-Kashmir when the message was conveyed to Yusuf he got frightened, consult his Chiefs, wanted to attend the Mughal court; but no one among them accepted his view and were ready to fight against the Mughals. Haider Malik Chadoora, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Eng., trans., p. 98.

Akbar thought it better not to leave Kashmir in a state of doubtful loyalty and a safe sanctuary for rebels. On 20th December 1585, five thousand strong Mughal force was dispatched comprising of Mirza Shahrukh Bahadur, Raja Baghwan Das, Shah Quli Mahran, Madhu Singh, and Mubark K. under the charge of Mohammad Ali Akbarshahi, Sheikh Yaqib Sarfi, and Haider Shah, taking the Pakhil route which remained generally open in winter.⁷³ Battle took place at Buliyas pass but with no decisive results. The rigorous climate and severe winter too played its part in restricting the Mughal advances into Kashmir. The Kashmiri passion in the war against the Mughals outshined its all limits as many as three thousand men were killed and the supply of food blocked to Mughal camp resulted in acute scarcity, even it was difficult to get a meal for *ashrafi* (gold coin).⁷⁴ A truce was concluded between Raja Bhagwan Das and Yusuf Shah but the terms were heavily loaded against the Kashmiris. The terms were “the pulpits and coins should make mention of the *Shahinshah* (Akbar), and that the mint, the saffron, the silk (woollen shawl) and the game should be imperial.”⁷⁵

After the concluding of treaty, Raja Bhagwan Das carried Yusuf Shah Chak from the village of Bolyas to the capital city of Lahore to pay homage to Emperor Akbar and return back to Kashmir. But on reaching Mughal court Yusuf Shah was imprisoned which was a clear violation on part of Akbar. The treatment of Emperor Akbar to Yusuf Shah Chak is according to Woosely Haig as “the chief blot in his character.”⁷⁶ Court historian Abul- Fazl has described the private talks which Akbar made with Yusuf Shah, as:⁷⁷

⁷³ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Eng., trans., H. Beveridge, Vol., II, p. 715.

⁷⁴ *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, p. 230; Haider Malik, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, f. 159a; Mullah Ahmad Kashmiri described this situation as:

*Gar Nazar bar hilal mi kardand,
Labe-i-naam Khayal mir Kardand
Gardan Khud daraz mi Khurdand
Dahan az baz mi kardana*

Its English rendering is -- when they beheld crescent, they imagined it to be brim of bread, they peeped out the long necks, only to represent their greed.

⁷⁵ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Eng., trans., H. Beveridge, p. 725.

⁷⁶ W. Haig, *The Cambridge History of India: The Mughal Period*, , p. 293.

⁷⁷ Abul Fazl, op.cit, p. 725.

Why the kindness of Shahanshan (Akbar) has passed from his memory, and why the influence of his son – who had fled from the court—had increased, and had by stratagems turned back the victorious army. Why had he himself not added the glory of acts to his talk about peace? He had the grace to be ashamed, and to reply his silence. Yusuf Shah was handed over to Todar Mal.

After few years in political wilderness; he died unwept and unsung in Bihar merely as petty Jagirdar of 500 horses with an annual income of 3600 rupees.⁷⁸ After the treaty, the Mughal forces withdrew from Kashmir. Yaqub Chak, son of Yusuf Shah, ascended the throne as an independent Sultan under the title of Ismail Shah.⁷⁹ This treaty might have shocked and humiliated the mighty Emperor who cherished for long to annex it and made it part of a larger Mughal empire. He did not ratify this treaty.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, during Yaqub's reign, there was greater unrest due to Sunni-Shia rift. The religious fanaticism proved fatal as the Sunni's became apprehensive of situation, ultimately Shaikh Yaqub Sarfi, the leader of the religio-political delegation entered into a treaty with Emperor Akbar. By taking such a decision, they consoled themselves with the thought that orthodoxy could be saved by the support of Emperor Akbar. While as the subalterns hoped, as they always did, something better for them from the change of rule. The saint embassy made some provisions necessary before Emperor Akbar would annex Kashmir. The following were the conditions:⁸¹

- (i) The ruling prince shall not interfere with religious affairs; the purchase and sale of the commodities; and the rate of cereals.
- (ii) Kashmiris shall not be made slaves (As was the custom in Medieval times)
- (iii) The inhabitants of the country shall not be molested or oppressed in any way; nor shall be they required to do *begar* (forced labour).

⁷⁸ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Eng., trans., H. Beveridge, p. 725. Haider Malik, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, p. 90.

⁷⁹ Mohammad-ud-Din Fouq, *Mukamal Tarikh-i- Kashmir*, Eng., Trans, R. K. Bharti, A *Complete History of Kashmir*, Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 2009, p. 357.

⁸⁰ Abul Fazl, op.cit, p. 726

⁸¹ Muhammad Azam, *Tarikh-i-Azami*, Urdu trans., p. 99; see also Mohibul Hasan, *Kashmir Under the Sultans*, pp. 183-84; G.M.D Sufi, *Islamic Culture in Kashmir*, Gulshan Books Srinagar, 2007, pp. 139-40; A. Q Rafiqi, *Sufism in Kashmir*, pp. 235-236.

- (iv) Those nobles of Kashmir who were a source of mischief shall not be given share in the administration.

Quite interestingly, from the above conditions, if true, the following facts can be discerned a) the proposal was of having a state with secular character, it meant the freedom, irrespective of distinction based on caste, social status and religion; b) the proposal aimed to safeguard the interests of the subalterns, rather to meet the exigencies of the social elites.

A reputed scholar of Kashmir A. Q. Rafiqi has, however, doubted the authenticity of this document; according to him, the story of his (Akbar) entering into an agreement with the Kashmiri Sufis and nobles seems to be later concoction as no earlier source either Mughal or Kashmiri have mentioned it. He further says, “it is unlikely that Akbar would accept terms, for he knew his own strength sufficiently well.”⁸² But there cannot be any doubt that the Kashmiri delegation to the court of Akbar was motivated by the Shia fanaticism which was further stimulated by the presence of Shia nobility.

On 28th June 1586, assured the full support from the Sunni embassy, Emperor Akbar despatched a large army and experienced officers like Fath Khan, Masnad Ali, Gujar, Ali Akbarshahi, Daulat Khangari, S. Sikander Rafiq, Shah Mohammad, Mir Abdur Razzaq Mammuri, Yadgar Husain, Lal Deo, Sonar Chand, Khawaja Zahir, Padshah Quli Shafaqat, Wali Beg, Hazari Beg and many other mansabdar's, Ahadis officers, and servants under the command of Mirza Qasim Bahr to invade Kashmir.⁸³ Mughal army crossed Bhimbar on 1st of September and on October 10th after serious fighting at Hastivanj, the last independent ruler of Kashmir was defeated. Though Yaqub Shah desperately tried to check the Mughal advance but Alas! He failed to get cooperation from fellow Kashmiris. Qasim Khan entered capital city of Srinagar on October 16th 1586, sealed once for all times to come, as it seems now the dwindling fortune of the Kashmir's political sovereignty as the sun of independence set far behind the thick and dark clouds of political obscurity and social insecurity. Notwithstanding the humiliation, Yaqub Shah fled to Kishtawar, 'land of last hope', where from he launched surprise attacks on

⁸² Cf. Rafiqi, *Sufism in Kashmir*, p.236.

⁸³ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Eng. Trans., H. Beveridge, Vol.III, p. 753.

Mughals. Ultimately, he surrendered before Akbar in 1589, was sent to join his father in the realms of wilderness under the custody of Raja Man Singh.⁸⁴

V

On the basis of above mentioned analysis on Kashmir; its inhabitants; and its annexation by the Mughals, it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

- i) Kashmir has had many appellations, all flattering, most undeserved: Enchanting Valley, Solomon's Garden, Switzerland of India, to name a few. In fact, the axiom of Kashmir 'the paradise on earth' was coined by the Mughal emperor, Jahangir. Importantly, the process of constructing the image of the proverbial beauty of the Kashmir started in the Mughal era, even this was time when Kashmir loomed large in the minds of Europeans through the writings of Father Jerome Xavier (nephew of great Catholic Francis Xavier) and Benedict de-Goes a Portuguese, who accompanied Emperor Akbar to Kashmir in AD 1597. However, the human history of the Kashmir has been less attractive, if mentioned, reduced to limitations of a page. They were barely deemed worth, as Mridu Rai states, 'the wastage in paint'.
- ii) The Mughals recognised the strategic, military, socio-economic and political importance of Kashmir. Its annexation in A.D 1586, by Emperor Akbar, was actually enthused by imperialistic designs and the considerations of the security of the Larger Mughal Empire. Adequate steps were taken to establish *thanas*, and to maintain effective control over this area. Moreover, it was Akbar's concept of United India with one sovereign, which prompted him to annex hilly states like Kishtawar, Punch, Pakhil, Little and Greater Tibet, Rajouri, Sarsal Damtur, Damyal and Noushera, as the integral part, and to broaden the scope and the defence of the Mughal Indian Empire.

⁸⁴ Abul Fazl, *op.cit*, p. 753-4; Showkat Ahmad Dar, *A Study of Changing Economy of Valley of Kashmir Under the Mughals*, p. 26. A contemporary, wrote on the terrible end of the Chaks as:

*Na Az Yousuf Nishan Didam, Na Az Yaqoob Aasaare
Azizan-i- Yousuf Az Gum Shud, Chi Shud Yaqoob Raa Baare*